

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, OVIP, XD, XC, SPOP

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

CHAIRMAN RUSSELL PETERSON, JAN. 8-30, 1976

REF: A. STATE 29497 B. CALCUTTA 2984

1. WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO WELCOME CEQ CHAIRMAN RUSSELL PETERSON AND ASSISTANT FOR INTERNATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS LEE TALBOT TO DACCA AND TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENTS WITH THOSE VERY FEW OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS HERE WHO HAVE ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR, OR INTEREST IN, ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS. HOWEVER, IN THIS POOREST OF THE POOR LARGE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD, OFFICIAL INTEREST IN THE ENVIRONMENT IS LIMITED BY THE OVERWHELMING NEED TO CONCENTRATE ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATIVE TALENT ON HIGHER PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

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2. THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR MULTI-LATERAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, ASSISTED BY A DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING BANGLADESH POLICIES VIS A VIS UNEP (AND ALL OTHER UN BODIES PLUS ALL OTHER INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC BODIES, E.G., GATT). IN ADDITION, THE MINISTRY OF FORESTRY AND FISHERIES IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE AND ENDANGERE

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SPECIES. THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION HAS STARTED SOME PRELIMINARY WORK ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS. THE ONLY PRIVATE ORGANIZATION CONCERNED WITH THE ENVIRONMENT OF WHICH WE ARE AT PRESENT AWARE IS THE SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS. IN SUM, THERE IS VERY LITTLE IN BANGLADESH THAT WILL HELP MR. PETERSON AS REGARDS PARA TWO REF A.

3. POPULATION IS A VERY DIFFERENT MATTER. THE EFFECT OF UNCHECKED POPULATION GROWTH ON DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS FOR BANGLADESH IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED HERE. A RECENT AID STUDY PROJECTS A 1985 POPULATION AT 106 MILLION AND ACCORDINGLY A FOODGRAIN IMPORT BILL OF UP TO \$2 BILLION. THERE ARE SEVERAL PARTS OF THE GOVERNMENT, NOTABLY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, POPULATION CONTROL AND FAMILY PLANNING; NUMEROUS FOREIGN AID PROGRAMS AND DONOR AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE UNFPA; SEVERAL PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS; AND INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, ALL ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM HERE. HOWEVER, KEY GOVERNMENT DECISIONS TO IMPROVE ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS ARE YET TO COME AND THE LACK OF PROGRESS TO DATE IN THIS AREA THREATENS THE ENTIRE AID EFFORT

4. THIS AREA IS ATTRACTING VERY GREAT US AND OTHER DONOR ATTENTION IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. SENATOR MCGOVERN AND A PARTY OF FIVE WILL BE HERE JANUARY 11-13. WE HEAR THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THAT AMBASSADOR MARSHALL GREEN, THE SECRETARY'S POPULATION ADVISOR MAY BE IN DACCA IN JANUARY. ASSISTANT AID ADMINISTRATOR FOR ASIA ARTHUR GARDINER EXPECTS TO BE HERE IN EARLY FEBRUARY, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY ASSISTANT AID ADMINISTRATOR FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CURT FARRAR. IBRD VICE PRESIDENT FOR ASIA, ERNEST STERN ARRIVES JANUARY 14 TO CONVEY DONOR CONCERNS AND AN IBRD POPULATION PROJECT REVIEW TEAM WILL BE IN DACCA THROUGHOUT MOST OF JANUARY.

5. ACCORDINGLY, WE MAY FACE SOME SCHEDULING PROBLEMS AS THE NUMBER OF SENIOR BANGLADESH OFFICIALS CONCERNED IS UNDERSTANDABLY SMALL. THEREFORE WE COULD BENEFIT BY MORE PRECISE GUIDANCE REGARDING THE SUBJECTS CHAIRMAN PETERSON WISHES TO DISCUSS OR KINDS OF SITES TO BE VISITED.

6. WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT CHAIRMAN PETERSON PLAN TO FLY TO BANGKOK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VIA TG 304 DEPARTING DACCA AT 1800 ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 20. BANGLADESH BIMAN HAS BUT ONE BOEING 707 AND ITS FLIGHT BG 008 IS FREQUENTLY DELAYED BY AS MUCH AS 24 HOURS AND HAS SOMETIMES BEEN CANCELLED ALTOGETHER. THE NEXT SCHEDULED DIRECT FLIGHT TO BANGKOK DEPARTS FRIDAY, JANUARY 23.

7. CONTROL OFFICER IS ECONOMIC COUNSELOR DONALD BORN. CHESLAW

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